run

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Not Rated

Archive Warning:
Graphic Depictions Of Violence

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M/M

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Charlie Dalton/Knox Overstreet

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run

by fayefaith

Summary

Knox runs.

More than he ever has for soccer, more than he ever has when he once got chased down by a coyote. His heart is beating a million miles an hour and his legs want to give out but his mind is telling him to keep going.

Keep running. Get to Charlie. Get to Charlie. Get to Charlie.

Notes

tw: suicide attempt, graphic depictions of death.

been on a sad/angst streak so here we are. No one dies but proceeed with caution!

See the end of the work for more notes

“Rare is this love, keep it covered

I need you to run to me, run to me, lover

Run until you feel your lungs bleeding”

“Hello?”

“Hey...”

“Hey!” Knox exclaims, finally hearing from Charlie after a week of being apart. Graduation was coming in a few days and all of Knox’s family members and relatives have come up from Boston to see him in his cap and gown. The summer nights were getting hotter and Knox finds himself bringing the rotary phone into the guest bedroom, where their electrical fan was running.

“...and so my cousin, Phil, you remember my cousin Phil, he sticks a knife in and he gets electrocuted! Can you believe it?” Knox says, laughing as he lays down on the bed. “My aunt Gemma was furious! But I saw mom on the corner of my eye and I’m swear I saw a little smile!” he adds. He hears a small smile on the other end of the receiver; unusual from Charlie, who normally would be laughing with the same magnitude as him.

“Charlie? Wha-”

“Have I ever told you how much you mean to me, Knox?” Charlie abruptly but softly asks and Knox senses something’s wrong. He hears a sniff, meaning Charlie’s been crying.

“Charlie, what’s going on?” he asks, panic beginning to envelope his

heart.

“God, I’ll miss your voice so much” Charlie says, making Knox’s stomach drop and that’s all he needed to hear before running to the door.

“Charlie, where are you?” Knox asks, running down the stairs and all he could hear was a sob from Charlie.

“I’m so stupid! I’m so stupid!” he hears Charlie say through his cries and Knox does everything he can to calm his nerves because Charlie needs him there. He tries putting on his shoes while cradling the receiver between his shoulder and ear.

“Charlie, where.are.you.” Knox asks again, now feeling out of breath as he runs to get the car keys.

“I’m on the roof. Stole the phone from Nolan’s office.” he confesses with a chuckle before adding “The night sky is so beautiful, Knox”.

“Charlie, listen to me. I need you to get down from there, please-“

“No one ever talks about how beautiful the sky is, babe-“

“Charlie-“

“I’m a good for nothing child. A fucking disgrace-“

“Charlie, please! I’m begging you! Go back inside! Or at least stay put until I get there! Please!” Knox begs as he stands on his front door, the cable of the phone only going as far as it can. Stupid cords!

“Charlie, listen.” Knox says, speaking calmly so that the tears in his eyes don’t fall. “I’m going to hang up because I need to get to you. I need you to stay where you are, okay?” he pleads, hoping to hear some sort of confirmation from the other but all he hears is silence.

“Charlie, promise me I’ll see you when I get there.” Knox pleads again, his voice breaking. A beat passes before all he hears is a sad sigh from the other. *God, please, please, please…*

“I love you…so much, Knox” Charlie whispers before the line goes dead.

Knox *runs*.

More than he ever has for soccer, more than he ever has when he once got chased down by a coyote. His heart is beating a million miles an hour and his legs want to give out but his mind is telling him to keep going.

Keep running. Get to Charlie. Get to Charlie. Get to Charlie.

The second he hits the brakes, he almost kicks the car door open and sprints to Welton’s entrance doors. Running up the stairs, all the while shouting Charlie’s name. Other than the school janitor who sleeps on the other side of building, no one was there to hear his voice except empty beds and blank halls that once were cluttered with young boys.

He bolts through the familiar corridor, where he and Charlie would pass by to reach the rooftop and star gaze.

He climbs the ladder, reaching the rooftop, he finds...no one.

Knox's heart drops and he thinks he's gonna faint.

He sees the rotary phone, discarded on the floor and for a second, he stops and mentally prepares himself for the horror he might witness. He prays to God that he wasn't just gonna see his boyfriend's remains splattered all over the concrete. With his head busted open and his limbs in impossible angles.

Knox talks a deep breath and resumes walking. He peers over the ledge, tears blurring his vision before seeing nothing but grass and the sidewalk.

First came the confusion and then the wave of relief. Knox hunches and thinks he's gonna vomit but nothing comes out. His head is swirling in a weird daze and collapsing sounds really good right now. *Okay, so he didn't jump...* he thinks.

After a few deep breaths and a good minute of steadying himself, he runs back down into the corridors, looking at every corner of every room of every hallway. His breathing getting heavier and heavier as he passes all the empty rooms in hopes he would find his boyfriend.

He even checks by their room and sees it the same way he left it except for dust starting to settle on their desks. A brief feeling of sadness washes over him as he was hoping the last time he was in this room was in good spirits. Now, it was in search for his (possibly) dead boyfriend.

Knox wracks his brain as he tries to think for a brief moment of clarity where else Charlie would go within the school premises. Suddenly, a figurative lightbulb illuminates in his brain as he realizes that he forgot to check the only other place Charlie could be.

"Charlie?!" Knox calls out, walking to the entrance of the cave before finally seeing the boy he's been searching for, crouched with arms folded around himself and a small cigarette in between his fingers. They lock eyes and Knox doesn't even think; he kneels in front of Charlie and hugs him. And hugs him, and hugs him, and hugs him. He grabs the other's face and kisses him and kisses him, and kisses him, and kisses him.

It was worth it, all of it Knox thinks. At some point, the emotions overflow and they both start sobbing; one out of relief and the other out of shame. Charlie mutters apology after apology as Knox lands kIss after kiss on Charlie's lips with accompanying 'I love you's in between.

"Jesus fucking Christ, Charlie" he exasperates, putting his forehead on the other. "Are you okay? You're not hurt?" he asks, scanning the other's body for any damage. Charlie shakes his head and Knox sighs of relief. He thinks about how much grief he must be in now had Charlie not decided to step off that ledge; how different the tears streaming down his face would mean if his boyfriend didn't second guess himself.

Charlie looks up and Knox notices how his eyes looked so lost. For the first time in his life, he saw Charlie's eyes just absolutely dead. No light. No joy; the once bright twinkle in his eyes that signified his trademark mischief and confidence, was diminished.

Knox looks around and realizes that he didn't notice the sleeping bag and backpack that was laid out next to them.

"Wha-?"

"My parents found out" was all Charlie could mutter. And suddenly everything clicked into place as Knox could imagine how it all went down.

Screaming, crying, punching, kicking. Charlie in tears, packing his bag and running as far as he can from them. And finding solace, once again, in their cave.

"I had nowhere to go and I thought I was gonna be fine..." Charlie said before a fresh new batch of tears start brewing in his eyes "...but everything came down and I was so lonely..." he adds, his voice breaking on the last word, as he covers his eyes with his palms, his sadness consuming his entire being. Knox immediately hugs the other, trying to convey all the things he wants to say with his embrace. *I love you, you're not alone, you mean so much to me, I'm here for you...*

"I'm glad you called me because that was the right thing to do" Knox says, his mouth buried in Charlie's neck before releasing the other. "but don't you ever, ever, *ever* do that again" Knox says sternly and the other nods, realizing the gravity of his almost-fatal mistake.

"And don't ever think twice about calling me for help. You know I'd be here in a heartbeat" Knox says, pushing Charlie's fringe away from his face, revealing a nasty cut on his temple. He tries not to wince as he examines the severity.

"I didn't want to inconvenience you" Charlie mutters, shrugging his shoulders and Knox's heart breaks the 100th time today. He cups

Charlie's cheek, making sure they lock eyes with whatever he says next. God, he would have missed these eyes. Gorgeous orbs filled with love and now, sorrow.

"Not if it's you, Charlie." Knox plainly says and Charlie wants to cry again but out of sheer joy and love, feelings that he thought would have been impossible to achieve just less than an hour ago. "Okay?" Knox asks and Charlie responds with a nod and a bittersweet kiss on Knox's lips.

Bonus:

"Knox, I'm not sure this is a good idea!"

"It'll be fine!"

The boys whisper as they descend to the bottom floor, hoping to not be too loud, which was an easy task as the kitchen was bustling with noise this morning.

Charlie tries to be cautious with his movements as several picture frames are mounted on the wall next to the staircase as well as tiny, fragile, trinkets that surrounded the Overstreet household. The kind that you would only see at an old woman's house, which Charlie swears he's seen on TV where the owner ends up being an axe murderer-

"There you are!" a loud woman's voice greets them and Charlie's soul almost jumps out of his body. He realizes almost 11 pairs of eyes were staring back at them, all of their mouths stuffed with breakfast. He memory comes back of Knox telling him everyone was in town for graduation and he mentally curses himself for not remembering sooner.

He would have at least worn sweatpants. Meeting the *entire* family tree in a Welton sweatshirt and plaid boxers didn't give off a good impression.

"Did you fellas have a good sleep? I hope the heat wasn't a bother!" the woman says. She was a heavier-set woman with an infectious smile and auburn, curly hair cut above her shoulders.

"It was all good. Uh mom, everyone, this Charlie." Knox introduces bringing Charlie closer to everyone's view and Charlie gives a smile. "my boyfriend" Knox adds.

Charlie realizes he's never really heard Knox call him his boyfriend and it was endearing hearing it, especially with pride infront of his family. His heart saddens but swells thinking how lucky he is and how much he would have missed had he pushed through with his plans the night before. Everyone makes an effort to greet him without choking on their food except for Knox's mom who puts down the bowl of pancake batter she was holding and approaches Charlie with a small smile.

"Well, welcome to our home, Charlie." She softly says before suddenly hugging him, and Charlie for a second freezes, not knowing what to do with himself. Not only did he feel like her words blended together, making the "our" in her comment possibly include him, but also, all the years of repressed loneliness and yearning for a mother's love was finally being filled this very instant and if Charlie thought about it too much, he might start crying.

She pulls away before staring at him, with the same hazel eyes Charlie sees in Knox "Glad to have you here." she kindly says before ushering the boys to the table and the ruckus resumes; cousins fighting and bickering and adults asking for more bacon.

Knox and Charlie grab a plate as the merriment continues to echo throughout the house and Charlie stares at everyone's faces; laughing, joking, telling stories, and he realizes that had he not run away from his house, he would never have found home.

End Notes

1. Mobile phones > rotary phones

2. That "inconvenience" line is based off of Orestes by Euripides.

3. Feel free to leave a kudos or a nice comment! I love reading them!

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